



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Release No. 11-03
For Immediate Release:
June 30, 2011

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Stevens takes command of Army Corps of Engineers in the Pacific

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii--Col. Edward J. Kertis relinquished his position as commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Pacific Ocean Division to Brig. Gen. Richard L. Stevens during a Change of Command ceremony June 30 at historic Palm Circle, here.

With the passing of the ceremonial flag symbolizing the official change of command, Stevens now leads nearly 1,800 military and Department of Army civilian engineers, technicians and other professionals in the annual execution of a \$2 billion program. He is responsible for executing a mission that includes engineering design, construction and real estate management for the Army in Hawaii, Army and Air Force in Alaska, and for all Department of Defense agencies in Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Kwajalein Atoll, Republic of the Marshall Islands.

"I am exceptionally proud to be taking charge of a Division that is justifiably regarded as one of the most professional and well respected public engineering enterprises in the world," said Stevens. "I am honored."

Stevens previously served multiple duty assignments within the Headquarters, Department of the Army at the Pentagon, culminating with his most recent assignment as the executive officer to the 36th Army Chief of Staff.

Stevens hails from Vincennes, Ind., and received his commission as an Engineer officer upon graduation from the United States Military Academy in 1982. He has held a variety of command and staff positions around the world, including operations in Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Maj. Gen. Merdith W. B. (Bo) Temple, acting commanding general of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, hosted the ceremony and expressed his confidence in Stevens' leadership.

"Your (Stevens) leadership, technical savvy and ability to build productive partnership will absolutely ensure the success of the Pacific Ocean Division.

Temple thanked Kertis' for his focused and insightful leadership.

"Pacific Ocean Division's efforts and leadership are an important and positive component of our national strategy in this increasingly vital part of the world," said Temple. "Certainly we are grateful for the leadership of Col. Ed Kertis. He stepped into command in this position and never missed a beat."

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – PACIFIC OCEAN DIVISION

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CHANGE OF COMMAND 2-2-2

Kertis expertly directed a full range of engineering capabilities throughout the U.S. Pacific Command's area of responsibility.

In the face of enormous natural, political and fiscal challenges, Kertis directed the two largest host-nation military construction projects in the history of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers--a \$10.4 billion Korea Transformation Program, which will relocate U.S. troops from various bases in Korea to an expanded U.S. Army Garrison-Humphreys in the Republic of Korea; and a \$15 billion Defense Policy Review Initiative in Japan.

Kertis led the division in executing 100 percent of its civil works and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act projects, which helped put local contractors to work in Hawaii and Alaska.

During his tenure, Kertis emphasized the Corps' growing execution of the U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Army Pacific's theater security cooperation initiatives. The division has completed more than 130 humanitarian assistance projects in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Lao, Cambodia and Indonesia, totaling \$36 million.

For his exceptional service from July 2010 to June 2011, Kertis received the Meritorious Service Medal.

Kertis will deploy to Afghanistan and step into his new role as the Corps of Engineers Assistant Division Commander for Operations of the Transatlantic Division.

The Change of Command ceremony—a time-honored tradition—dates back to the passing of the scepter (a symbol of authority) from the old Caesar to the new, in the progression of the Roman Empire. The U.S. Army adopted the custom of passing the Colors from the British, and instituted it in the 18th century when General George Washington assumed command of the Continental Army in Boston on July 3, 1775.

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FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii—Brig. Gen. Richard L. Stevens (r) receives the Army Colors from Maj. Gen. Merdith W. B. Temple (l), during a Change-of-Command ceremony June 30 on Palm Circle, Fort Shafter, here. Col. Edward J. Kertis (front left) relinquished command of the Corps' Pacific Ocean Division to Stevens, who became the 30th commander of the division. (Photo by Dino Buchanan)

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